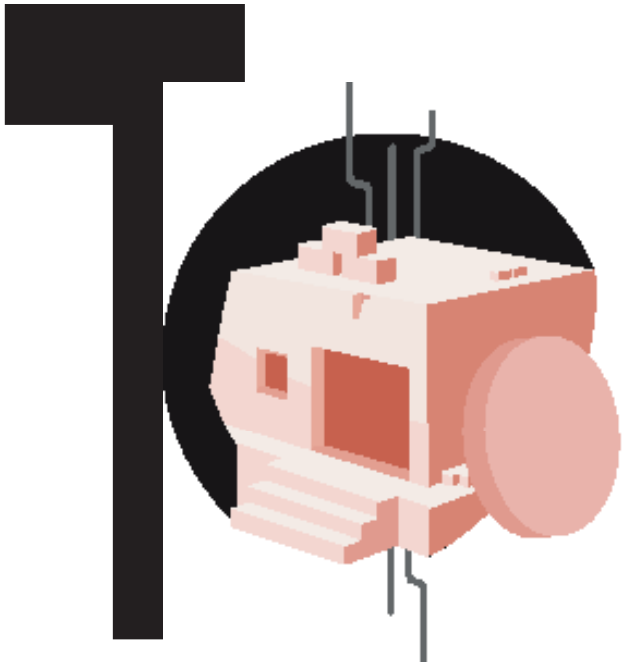


Unit .27

Session .01

Jesus Is Resurrected

Scripture

John 20:1-10

1 On the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came
to the tomb early, while it was still dark. She saw that
the stone had been removed from the tomb. **2** So she
went running to Simon Peter and to the other disciple,
the one Jesus loved, and said to them, "They've taken
the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where
they've put him!" **3** At that, Peter and the other disciple
went out, heading for the tomb. **4** The two were
running together, but the other disciple outran Peter
and got to the tomb first. **5** Stooping down, he saw the
linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in. **6** Then,
following him, Simon Peter also came. He entered
the tomb and saw the linen cloths lying there. **7** The
wrapping that had been on his head was not lying with
the linen cloths but was folded up in a separate place by
itself. **8** The other disciple, who had reached the tomb
first, then also went in, saw, and believed. **9** For they
did not yet understand the Scripture that he must rise
from the dead. **10** Then the disciples returned to the
place where they were staying.

Intro Options

Main Point:
Sin and death were defeated in Jesus' resurrection.

Option 1

Break students into small groups. They are to create crime scenes (could be a kidnapping, a robbery, just nothing gruesome); they can either make photographs (drawings) of the crime scene, or they can enact the crime scene in pantomime. They should create their crime scenes such that a careful detective could figure out the motive and guilty party in the crime (think of it as a version of the game Clue).

Give them time to prepare their scenes and then have them show the scenes. As they show their scenes, the rest of the group should try to deduce the crime: who did it? Why did they do it? How did they do it?

Once everyone has gone, ask them to imagine that they've been the detectives called to investigate the disappearance of Jesus' body the first Easter morning. Have them consider the crime scene: nobody, stone rolled away, passed-out guards, an earthquake, burial linens folded. What would they deduce happened? Is an actual resurrection the best explanation?

Tell your students that as they look at the resurrection story today, they'll see three stages: initial disbelief, acknowledgment of evidence for the resurrection, and then development of belief in the miracle.

Option 2

Your student group has been hired by the Ad Council to create posters (drawings) or commercials (skits) to help them promote emotional wellness. Specifically, your group is to focus on a campaign to help people accept life-changing news in a healthy way.

Have your students get into small groups (or solo if they want to make posters). Each group should produce two scenes: unhealthy stages of acceptance and healthy stages of acceptance. In the first instance, they should consider bad steps people go through when they first receive big news (it could be good news or bad news). In the second instance, they should consider and show good steps people go through when they receive good or bad news.

Let them share what they came up with. Look for patterns or insightful comments.

In today's lesson, the disciples will get the life-changing news of Jesus' resurrection. As we see how they reacted, let's consider whether they went through good or bad stages of receiving the news. Have we received the news of Jesus' resurrection well? How can we help others to receive it well instead of badly?

TEACHING PLAN

Read John 20:1-2.

The process of burying Jesus was rushed because of the coming Sabbath. Prohibited by tradition from carrying out work or coming into contact with the dead on this sacred day, those who placed Jesus in the tomb quickly carried out a partial preparation that would have to do until after the day of rest. According to Matthew, the two Marys went to see the tomb, but we know from Mark and Luke that their purpose was not to observe or pay respects. Instead, they intended to further prepare Jesus' body with various spices for burial (Mark 16:1; Luke 23:55–24:1).

The women who saw the stone rolled away from the tomb didn't immediately praise God because they didn't yet know Jesus was risen. They weren't looking for the miraculous. Instead the women believed that there must be some human explanation for Jesus' missing body from the tomb.

Jesus' resurrection inaugurates His kingdom on earth, giving His followers freedom from the oppression of sin and death because His resurrection declares Him victorious. Because Jesus was raised as the firstfruits of the new creation (1 Cor. 15:23), we can trust that we are hidden in Him, also to be raised to reign with Him upon His return.

- **Imagine you were with the women visiting the tomb. How would you have responded to what you saw?**

Read John 20:3-7.

It had been a difficult three days full of uncertainty, grief, and fear. To be associated with Jesus meant potentially to be guilty by association of the same crime, deserving the same fate. Yet, this news brought the disciples out of their homes and to the tomb. For both the women running to the disciples and the disciples running to the tomb, news concerning their beloved Jesus required immediate action. Love motivates, and although they didn't understand the happenings yet, they loved Jesus.

- **Do you think the disciples were afraid before hearing about the empty tomb? Explain your answer.**

99 Essential Doctrines (p. 80, DDG)

Faith

Biblical faith is the resting, or trusting, in Christ alone for salvation (John 3:16-21). More than being simply a mental agreement of historical facts, genuine faith begins with a recognition and confession of the truth of the gospel (1 John 4:13-16), followed by a receiving of Christ as Lord and Savior of one's life (John 1:10-13). Biblical faith is not blind faith, for it rests on the historical life, death, and resurrection of Christ.

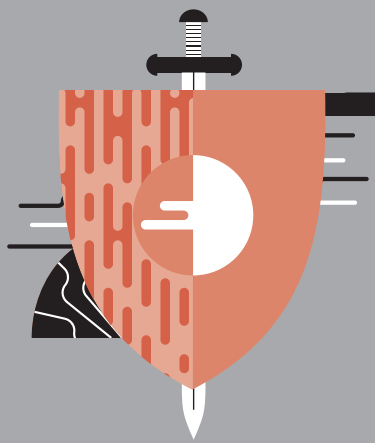
COMMENTARY

Main Point:
Sin and death were defeated in Jesus' resurrection.

John 20

1. Jesus did what no one else could do for Mary Magdalene, cast seven demons from her (Mark 16:9). She responded to this freedom from demonic oppression with love and devotion as she traveled alongside Jesus and the disciples as they shared the good news (Luke 8:2). Her love continued as she—and the women with her (see v. 2; Matt. 28:1; Mark 16:1; Luke 24:10)—brought spices to anoint Him before the sun rose the day after the Sabbath.

2. "It is remarkable that all four Gospels (cf. Matt. 28:1; Mark 16:2; Luke 24:1) introduce their respective resurrection accounts by specifying the first day of the week, rather than 'the third day' after the crucifixion (cf. 1 Cor. 15:3,4), despite Jesus' passion predictions (Mark 8:31). The reason is disputed, but it may have to do with the desire to present the resurrection of Jesus as the beginning of something new. John says the first approach to the tomb took place while it was still dark, i.e. early on Sunday morning. Mark specifies dawn; Luke says 'very early in the morning,' and Matthew uses a complicated construction that probably means much the same… If Mary Magdalene first approached the tomb alone, and then with other women, John's darkness may suggest that she went before dawn. Whether this is so or not, one is tempted to think that John emphasizes the darkness of the dawn because he is still using light/darkness symbolism [cf. 3:2; 13:30]: the darkness of the hour is the perfect counterpart to the darkness that still shrouds Mary's understanding."[1]



In Defense (p. 82, DDG)

It is remarkable that women were the first to testify to the reality of the resurrection of Jesus' resurrection. From a first-century legal perspective, they were unworthy to be witnesses. Indeed, that fact has often been offered as a strong supporting piece of evidence for the historical accuracy of the resurrection. After all, how likely would it be for someone in that culture to create a story based off of the testimony of witnesses who would have been viewed as relatively unreliable?

TEACHING PLAN

Jesus' body had not been stolen, which would be a violation of both Roman law and Jewish burial integrity. Instead, the cloths from Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus that had been wrapped around Jesus' body to prepare Him for burial were inside the tomb (John 19:38-40). Jesus' body had lain there three days, beginning to decay. No one would want to carry His body away without the linen wrappings. It would be stinky, heavy, and considered unclean (Num. 19:11).

These seemingly insignificant pieces of fabric were preaching the good news of the risen Christ to those at the tomb. Nothing like this had been seen before. The grave clothes mentioned in John 11:44 when Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead were different. He needed to be unwrapped, but our Savior emerged from the tomb as the firstfruits of a new kind of resurrection.

- **In what ways was Jesus the firstfruits? What does this mean for all who are in Christ?**

Read John 20:8-10.

John's belief, as described in these verses, should bring us great comfort. He believed the resurrection had occurred, despite his inability to comprehend it all. There are many truths we believe in faith that contain details far beyond our comprehension: the Trinity, creation out of nothing, the new heavens and new earth, and how God has never ceased to exist and has no beginning. Today, we have an advantage in that we have God's total and complete Word, showing us how all of the prophecies point to Jesus. However, John believed not because of the weight of prophecy that he studied, but because he saw an empty tomb.

- **What truths about Christianity do we believe despite our inability to fully understand them? What does it look like to trust Jesus as our risen Lord, even when we cannot see the object of our faith?**

While the disciples had not yet seen Jesus, our salvation was already secure in His resurrection. Jesus' resurrection testifies the truth of all of Scripture, the sufficiency of His atoning death for sin, and our justification before the living God by faith alone in Christ and His work. In His resurrection is the proclamation of the defeat of sin and death. Our faith's value finds its bearing in the resurrection, as we are united with Him in it: "For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins" (1 Cor. 15:16-17).

- **In what ways is our faith dependent upon the resurrection? In what ways is the resurrection important in your everyday life?**

COMMENTARY

Main Point:
Sin and death were defeated in Jesus' resurrection.

John 20

3-7. "Lazarus would need those grave clothes when he died again, but Jesus had defeated death."[2] Jesus had been raised in a resurrection body incapable of dying, a picture of His forever defeat of death. Jesus' resurrection would be the first of its kind, but certainly not the last. He is the firstfruits of the world to come, the beginning of the new heaven and earth, a picture of the "already and not yet" kingdom of God, over which He was crowned as King through His crucifixion and resurrection (1 Cor. 15:20-23).

8. "The character of the perceiving of the revelation in the tomb is emphasized by the different Greek words employed in our text. In John 20:5 the word "saw" simply means to see something—that is all John did when he looked through the portal of the grave. In John 20:6 the word "seeth" means to look a something closely, to investigate it—that was Peter investigating. In John 20:8 the word "saw" means to see with perception—that was John who now comprehended what the grave clothes meant, namely, the resurrection of Christ."[3]

9. "What Scripture might John have had in mind when he wrote verse 9? Quite possibly Isaiah 53:10-12 or even Psalm 16:10. What did he actually believe if he did not understand the biblical background of resurrection? Perhaps the best option in the text is to conclude that John believed Jesus was alive but could not figure out why or what would happen next. That fits well with the great surprise of the disciples at post-resurrection appearances."[4]

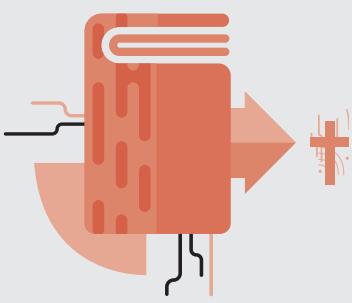
Activity

There's an acronym BFO: Blinding Flash of the Obvious. It's when something that is intellectually clear suddenly becomes personally clear in a way that really affects the way we live; for example, saving money rather than spending it accumulates wealth. Put your students into small groups. Ask each group to come up with a short skit scene showing a BFO. Humor is good. Let them prepare and show their skits.

Next, they should come up with another BFO scene, but this time the "Obvious" will be Jesus' resurrection. When we realize the truth of Jesus' resurrection, how do our lives change? For example, it might be that since Jesus has risen, He is Lord, and so we must do what He says: loving our enemies, honoring our parents, etc. It might be that since Jesus has risen, we, too, will rise, and so we should live for eternity, not for this life; how would this idea change the way we use our phones or our free time? Have them prepare their new BFO scenes and then show them. Debrief by discussing how the realization of the obvious (Jesus' resurrection) will change their lives this week.

(p. 81, DDG) Christ Connection

On Easter Sunday, God vindicated His Son's perfect sacrifice by raising Him from the dead and beginning the new creation He had long promised to His people. Through faith, we are united to Christ and share in the promise of being resurrected in His likeness. Sin's curse has been removed, death has been defeated, and we are assured of everlasting life with God.



JESUS IS RESURRECTED
Sin and death were defeated in Jesus' resurrection.

JESUS CONNECTION
God raised Jesus from the dead to show that He accepted Jesus' perfect sacrifice for sins and to demonstrate the new life He offers to us in Jesus. Through faith, we are united to Christ in His death and His resurrection. Because He has risen, sin's curse has been removed, death has been defeated and we are promised everlasting life with God.

LIFEWISE QUALITY
CONFIDENCE – Full trust or assurance in the reliability of a person or thing.

HEAD
What specific details did the women and the disciples see at the tomb?

At first, what did the disciples think happened to Jesus when they saw the empty tomb?

HEART

Confidence is trusting fully in someone or something, but it's not believing blindly. Confidence must be based on evidence (past behavior or verifiable proof). How does the empty tomb give us confidence that Jesus can save us?

What are some reasons that someone might lose confidence in another person (a family member, coach/teacher or friend)? How can knowing who God is help us keep our confidence in Him?

To be someone others have confidence in, we must behave consistently and reliably, even when we don't feel like it. We do what we say we'll do. We tell the truth. We don't act one way with some friends and differently with others. Choose 1–2 options from the list below and commit to doing them consistently this week. Ask God to help you live reliably, just as He is.

- Finish and turn in every homework assignment this week. Focus on the class or classes where you often struggle to complete your homework.
- Complete all of your assigned chores thoroughly without being reminded.
- Treat your friends and classmates with the same respect, kindness and consideration, whether they are your best friend or not.
- Whenever you are asked a question, answer honestly and gently, even when the answer may not be received well or may get you into trouble.